



Town of Groton, Connecticut

Meeting Minutes

Town Council Committee of the Whole

45 Fort Hill Road
Groton, CT 06340-4394
Town Clerk 860-441-6640
Town Manager
860-441-6630

Mayor Patrice Granatosky, Councilor David Atwater, Councilor Conrad F. Heede, Councilor Rachael Franco, Councilor Rich Moravsik, Councilor Lian Obrey, Councilor Juliette Parker, Councilor Rita Schmidt, and Councilor Joe Zeppieri

Tuesday, March 27, 2018

6:30 PM

Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1

REGULAR MEETING

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Granatosky called the meeting to order at 6:45 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Chairperson Granatosky, Councilor Atwater, Councilor Franco, Councilor Heede, Councilor Moravsik, Councilor Obrey, Councilor Parker, Councilor Schmidt and Councilor Zeppieri

Also present were Town Manager John Burt and Assistant to the Town Manager Nicki Bresnayan.

3. Calendar and Communications

Councilors reported on meetings and events they attended. Councilor Franco thanked the Chief of Police for the ride along."

RTM Representative Roseanne Kotowski was recognized by Councilor Heede. She advocated for the Minimum Budget Requirement for the Board of Education in the FYE 2019 Budget.

4. Approval of Minutes

2018-0065 Approval of Minutes (Committee of the Whole)

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the Town Council Committee of the Whole meetings of February 20, 2018, February 27, 2018 and March 6, 2018 are hereby accepted and approved.

A motion was made by Chairperson Granatosky, seconded by Councilor Parker, to adopt.

Mayor Granatosky asked that the votes for 2016-0256 Merritt Property Conversion and 2017-0298 Boulder Heights Conservation Easement in the March 6th minutes reflect that the items were postponed to a time definite (March 27th).

The motion carried unanimously

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

6. NEW BUSINESS

2018-0050 Lease of Town Hall Annex Office Space to Poquonnock Bridge Fire District

This matter was Recommended for a Resolution.

Town Manager Burt explained the request to relocate the Poquonnock Bridge Fire Marshal to a vacant office in the lower level of Town Hall Annex, under a five year lease.

The consensus of the Council was to recommend this for a resolution.

Later in the meeting Mayor Granatosky noted that the Planning Commission recommended in favor of the lease in response to the CGS 8-24 referral.

2017-0211 Presentation by Town's Actuary**Discussed**

Bill Woollacott from Hooker and Holcombe referenced a handout on the Town of Groton Retirement System, noting the changes in the plan from July 1, 2016 to July 1, 2017. He explained how the actuarially determined employer contribution is calculated. Mayor Granatosky asked for information on the length of time to reach 100% funding.

Mr. Woollacott reviewed Defined Benefit, Defined Contribution, and Hybrid plans. He introduced and explained another type of plan called a Cash Balance plan.

Town Manager Burt noted that Tim Ryor, formerly of Hooker and Holcombe, had calculated that a 2% COLA increase for existing retirees would cost approximately \$53,000. He added that the Town will look at all options, but the main thing is to get away from a defined benefit plan.

2017-0159 Colonel Ledyard School Site**Discussed**

City Mayor Keith Hedrick, City Director of Finance Ron Yuhas, and City Public Works Director Tim Umrysz were present. Mayor Hedrick explained that the City, which is leasing the Colonel Ledyard School site from the Town, wants to return it to the Town. The building is vacant and there is currently a security system in place that costs \$60.00 per month. Public Works Director Gary Schneider noted that the Town does not carry security on vacant buildings. The building will be put into cold storage and inspected once a week. Discussion followed on the need for a security system. The roof was replaced by the City of Groton four or five years ago. Water service to the building has been shut off and drained.

The consensus of the Committee was to terminate the lease agreement and the security monitoring system agreement.

A motion was made by Councilor Schmidt, seconded by Councilor Atwater, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Votes: In Favor: 7 - Chairperson Granatosky, Councilor Atwater, Councilor Franco, Councilor Heede, Councilor Moravsik, Councilor Parker and Councilor Schmidt
Opposed: 2 - Councilor Obrey and Councilor Zeppieri

2018-0060 Road Reconstruction Bond - Year 6 Projects**Discussed**

City Mayor Keith Hedrick, City Director of Finance Ron Yuhas, and City Public Works Director Tim Umrysz were present. Mr. Yuhas distributed a report on the City of Groton's road work over the life of the road maintenance and rehabilitation bond. Remaining funds for the City for 2018 are \$569,853.22. Estimated funds remaining for 2019 are \$37,957.72.

President Mike Flynn and Director of Public Works Steve Panikoff from Groton Long Point were present. Mr. Panikoff noted the road maintenance bond has been very beneficial for Groton Long Point. He praised Mr. Schneider and the Town's road program, and noted the roads that Groton Long Point will take care of in 2018.

Mr. Schneider noted that the benefit of the program has been the ability to coordinate with Eversource and Aquarion as they are doing work. Mr. Schneider reviewed the Town's proposed schedules for 2018, 2019, and 2020.

Thomas Road has been added to the program for 2018 in accordance with previous discussions. LoCIP and CIP funds previously allocated for the project will be returned to the capital reserve. Councilor Obrey requested an accounting of the funds spent on Thomas Road.

A motion was made by Chairperson Granatosky, seconded by Councilor Moravsik, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.

The motion carried unanimously

2018-0077

Town-City Highway Analysis

Discussed

City Mayor Keith Hedrick, City Director of Finance Ron Yuhas, and City Public Works Director Tim Umrysz were present. Town Manager Burt noted this is a road study comparing the Town's and City's best practices. The cost is not to exceed \$70,000, with the Town and City each paying 50%. The recommendation is to transfer funds from Contingency to Public Works and authorize the Town Manager to sign a contract for the study.

A motion was made by Councilor Heede, seconded by Councilor Zeppieri, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.

The motion carried unanimously

2016-0256

Merritt Property Conversion

A motion was made by Councilor Heede, seconded by Councilor Franco, that the members of the Town Council Committee of the Whole, Town Manager John Burt, School Superintendent Mike Graner, and Town Attorneys Eileen Duggan and Eric Callahan go into executive session at 8:01 p.m. pursuant to General Statutes Section 1-200 (6) (B) for the purpose of strategy and negotiations with respect to pending claims or pending litigation in reference to the new middle school.

The motion carried unanimously

Discussed

The executive session ended at 9:08 p.m. The Committee recessed until 9:15 p.m.

A motion was made by Councilor Franco, seconded by Councilor Moravsik, that the Town Attorney take the legal steps needed to effectuate the Town's rights and interests related to the use of the Merritt Property and to direct the Town Manager to explore additional properties including the King property to place a conservation easement upon.

The motion carried unanimously

2017-0298

Boulder Heights Conservation Easement

Not Discussed

2018-0068

Supplemental Appropriation from Capital Reserve for Library/Senior Center Variable Message Display Sign

Discussed

Director of Parks and Recreation Mark Berry and Senior Center Coordinator Mary Jo Riley were present. Mr. Berry described the request to purchase a variable message display sign using funds from the Groton Parks Foundation and financing the remaining \$20,000 through a supplemental appropriation from the Capital Reserve Fund that would be repaid with a grant from Millstone. Mr. Berry described the sign and proposed funding.

A motion was made by Councilor Zeppieri, seconded by Councilor Heede, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.

The motion carried unanimously

2018-0069

Naming of Community Center at Fitch Middle School

Discussed

Director of Parks and Recreation Mark Berry requested the Town Council to consider selecting a name for the former Fitch Middle School building where Parks and Recreation will be relocating most of its programming. A public survey resulted in two top responses: Groton Community Center and Fitch Community Center.

A motion was made by Councilor Schmidt, seconded by Councilor Heede, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.

renamed, signage, etc. The consensus was to keep the name Fitch on the front of the building and to rename the community center portion of the building Groton Community Center.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Votes: In Favor: 8 - Chairperson Granatosky, Councilor Atwater, Councilor Franco, Councilor Heede, Councilor Moravsik, Councilor Obrey, Councilor Schmidt and Councilor Zeppieri
Abstain: 1 - Councilor Parker

2018-0074 Pfizer Local Community Grant - Senior Center

Discussed

Director of Parks and Recreation Mark Berry explained the proposal to apply for a \$5,000 grant for a virtual senior center.

A motion was made by Chairperson Granatosky, seconded by Councilor Schmidt, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.

The motion carried unanimously

2018-0070 Filling the Patrol Officer Position in the Police Department

Discussed and Recommended no action taken

Police Chief L. J. Fusaro and Director of Human Resources/Risk Management Bob Zagami were present. Chief Fusaro is looking for authorization to fill a vacant patrol officer position due to the hiring freeze that is in place. That will leave an additional two vacant positions in the department.

A motion was made by Councilor Heede, seconded by Councilor Schmidt, to authorize filling of the Patrol Office position in the Police Department.

The motion carried unanimously

2018-0029 Adoption of an Ordinance Amending Various Ordinances to Increase Fines

Discussed

Police Chief L. J. Fusaro noted this ordinance was the subject of a public hearing and the request is to approve the ordinance. Town Manager Burt noted that changes to the ordinance that were requested by Councilors were made.

A motion was made by Councilor Zeppieri, seconded by Councilor Heede, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.

The motion carried unanimously

2017-0293 Adoption of Rules for the Thirty-First Town Council

Discussed

Councilor Heede thanked Town staff for assistance in reviewing the rules.

A motion was made by Councilor Heede, seconded by Councilor Parker, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.

The motion carried unanimously

2018-0067 Appointment of Other Attorneys as Recommended by the Town Attorney

A motion was made by Councilor Obrey, seconded by Councilor Schmidt, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.

The motion carried unanimously

2018-0078 Position Changes

A motion was made by Councilor Heede, seconded by Councilor Parker, that members of the Town Council Committee of the Whole and Town Manager John Burt go into executive session at 9:45 p.m. pursuant to General Statutes Section 1-200 (6) (A) concerning the appointment, employment, performance, evaluation, health or dismissal of a public officer or employee..." in regards to the Town Manager.

The motion carried unanimously

Discussed

The executive session ended at 10:23 p.m.

A motion was made by Councilor Heede, seconded by Councilor Atwater, to recommend to the full Council to proceed with employee changes as discussed in Executive Session.

The motion carried unanimously

7. Consideration of Committee Referral Items as per Town Council Referral List

None.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

9. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Councilor Heede, seconded by Councilor Atwater, to adjourn the meeting at 10:24 p.m.

The motion carried unanimously.